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## Editor's Pick

Does the male menopause exist? On p 76, Gould and Petty argue that there is a syndrome of androgen deficiency in male middle age, which leads to hot flushes, mood changes, and sexual dysfunction. But Jacobs disagrees. He says that there is no convincing evidence that these symptoms are caused by a lack of testosterone (p 78). Korenman's position is somewhere in the middle (p 80). He has adopted the term "manopause" for a set of age-related changes of uncertain causation.

The pharmaceutical industry is of course interested in the debate. A testosterone skin patch is already on the market, and a gel will be available shortly. We are likely to see an aggressive marketing campaign, even though the very existence of the male menopause is contentious.

But the debate is valuable because it alerts us to a crisis amongst men. There is growing recognition by physicians of gender inequalities in health. Men in industrialized nations die on average 5 years earlier than women. They have a higher rate of suicide, of death from coronary artery

disease under the age of 65, and of hospital admissions due to stroke.

In attempting to address this crisis, there has been far too much focus on specific diseases, like prostate cancer, and not enough on the educational, social, and emotional factors that cause men to ignore their health and to adopt high risk behaviors. For most illnesses, men are less likely to consult their physicians than women. They are more likely to smoke and drink alcohol and are less likely to eat a healthy diet. They more often put themselves at risk of accidents and sexually transmitted diseases.

We should recognize that the burden of men's poor health falls on those who are already marginalized—men of low socioeconomic status and from ethnic minority groups. We shouldn't let the men's health movement be hijacked by drug companies intent to promote testosterone, or by zealous advocates of prostate cancer screening. Promoting men's health means raising responsible men and redressing social inequalities.